



## DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IMPROVES SERVICE DELIVERY AND INCREASES EFFICIENCY

Produced in partnership with

**Atos Origin is helping Birmingham City Council's Planning and Urban Design departments to reduce costs, improve response times and enhance customer relations.**

**“I have been particularly impressed that Atos Origin was at all times willing to adopt a flexible approach and was committed to jointly working with Birmingham to ensure that the business benefits were maximised.”**

**Eman Al-Hillawi  
Electronic Document  
Management System  
Project Manager,  
Birmingham City Council**

**“Quicker and more accurate search and recovery of planning applications by Council staff”**

**Mike Burtenshaw  
Team Lead, Planning,  
Birmingham City Council**

#### BACKGROUND

England's largest local authority, Birmingham City Council, covers 40 wards and over a million residents. Always looking for ways to improve its service, the Council aims to be one of the most effective in England, recognised for excellent services and efficient use of resources.

Technology is recognised as a key enabler in this goal and the Council's new corporate IT strategy is designed to allow more web-based contact with customers and business partners. Government expectations are also driving this process forward, with the internet increasingly seen as a primary channel for Council services.

#### CUSTOMER ISSUE

Birmingham's Planning Service is responsible for administering and recording planning applications, while its Urban Design team manages major projects across the City, including the renovation of Council-owned buildings. In total, the Council deals with around 800 documents related to planning applications and major projects per day. The types of documents vary enormously, from architectural plans to electronic images.

The Council processed planning applications using a combination of manual paper-based systems and electronic folders on shared servers. The complex processes required for collecting, copying and transporting, as well as storing and retrieving, planning documents were time-consuming and prone to error. It also required large amounts of physical space.

The existing system could not support the Council in meeting the Government's local authority electronic delivery targets. Therefore a solution was required to:

- Manage different document formats effectively
- Enable better collaboration between Council departments and suppliers
- Improve efficiency and productivity by reducing planning application processing time
- Enable the public to view planning information online rather than visiting Council offices.

#### OUR SOLUTION

In June 2004, Birmingham City Council contracted Atos Origin to undertake this project. Drawing on experience gained through document management-related projects at clients such as Reuters and Barclays Bank, Atos Origin worked closely with Birmingham City Council's Planning and Urban Design departments to develop a prototype solution.

Principal components of the solution included:

- Documentum's Enterprise Content Management platform (ECM). This aided departmental and supplier collaboration and reduced public application processing time, as well as enabling the public to view planning information remotely
- Captiva's Input Accel scanning and forms processing software
- Cimmetry's AutoVue Professional viewing software, which allows drawings, plans and other document formats to be accessed regardless of the native application.

With this powerful application suite, physical documents would be scanned, stored and indexed electronically, enabling the council to manage both paper-based and electronic documents and images. AutoCAD images, voice files, photographic files, and video recordings were incorporated later.



**“Atos Origin has provided us with a system that we desperately needed, which is more powerful and has greater accessibility than expected.”**

**Karen Jones  
Principal Support Manager,  
Urban Design  
Birmingham City Council**

Atos Origin integrated the Documentum platform with the Council's Urban Design and Planning systems, allowing existing attributes to be used during the indexing processes, while a validation process was created to assist in the correct filing of documents. Documentum was also integrated with the Council's Lotus Notes email services, so project or planning application email correspondence could be imported if required. Document routing logic further decreased processing time.

#### **BUSINESS BENEFITS**

The electronic document management solution will help the Council to increase the speed of access to the right information at the right time, while saving money and providing a better service to customers. Documents, whether scanned in, received electronically or created internally, can be consolidated into a systematic file structure.

The Council's new ability to integrate and re-engineer business processes will improve efficiency by using technology to automatically move documents to the right people at the right time. Staff will be able to spend more time working with the actual content rather than trying to access and retrieve it. Officers and managers will be able to track and monitor the progress of an application or a major project at the click of a button.

Remote access will enable documentary information to be accessed by multiple users and remote Council sites, as well as providing secure access to documents for customers and partner organisations.

Collaboration with contractors will also be easier. The Urban Design service works with an established team of external partners who will have direct and secure access to the system. This will not only reduce processing time, it will also improve access to files and enable the process itself to be audited.

Overall, customers will see improved service and greater security and the Council will see reduced costs through greater productivity and lowered overheads, such as reduced storage space. The system has generated a great deal of interest elsewhere in the Council, and will be evaluated for potential use across other departments, such as Social Care and Health, during its first phase of operation.

## About Atos Origin

Atos Origin is an international information technology services company. Its business is turning client vision into results through the application of consulting, systems integration and managed operations. The company's annual revenues are more than EUR 5 billion and it employs over 46,000 people in 40 countries. Atos Origin is the Worldwide Information Technology Partner for the Olympic Games and has a client base of international blue-chip companies across all sectors. Atos Origin is quoted on the Paris Eurolist Market and trades as Atos Origin, AtosEuronext, Atos Worldline and Atos Consulting. For more information, please visit the company's web site at [www.atosorigin.com](http://www.atosorigin.com)